United Nations

Press Release

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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General again expresses concern over humanitarian situation in Iraq; to appoint special committee to deal specifically with humanitarian aid, once authorized by Security Council.

- United Nations Observer Mission inaugurated in El Salvador.

- Conference on Disarmament opens third part of annual session in Geneva.

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Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar has announced that he will appoint a special committee to deal specifically with humanitarian aid to Iraq, as soon as it is authorized by the Security Council.

The Secretary-General made the announcement as he arrived at Headquarters this morning, when he again expressed concern over the living conditions of the Iraqi people. He told correspondents that the situation in Iraq concerns everyone "regardless of the political implications", stressing that it was up to the Security Council to take a decision authorizing the delivery of aid to Iraq.

Yesterday, the Council held consultations to consider details of a possible mechanism to monitor the use of money earned from the sale of oil by Iraq to finance its needs in food and medicine. Those discussions are continuing.

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Today, exactly one year after the signing of the Agreement on Human Rights between the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) in San Jose, Costa Rica, the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) was inaugurated.

The hoisting of the United Nations flag in San Salvador marked the inauguration of what has been described as a unique Mission that will verify

(more)

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fulfilment of the commitments undertaken by both parties in the historic Agreement -- to respect and promote human rights in El Salvador.

"There are high expectations among Salvadorians that our presence will help to improve the situation in El Salvador", said Iqbal Riza, Chief of ONUSAL, adding that the Mission will not only observe and report on the human rights situation, but also investigate cases and have them resolved.

Mr. Riza said ONUSAL was in El Salvador to work with the local authorities, as well as FMLN, to provide support to help them deal with human rights violations.

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In Geneva yesterday, the Conference on Disarmament opened the third part of its regular annual session at the Palais des Nations.

Among the speakers, the representative of Peru, Oswaldo de Rivero, informed the Conference of his Government's recent initiative to organize a meeting in November to agree on measures to limit arms and strengthen security among Latin American democracies.

The Swedish delegate, Maj Britt Theorin, introduced a draft comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, which she said should provide a political and technical basis for intensified work on that issue. The Romanian delegate, Romulus Neagu, strongly advocated that all countries in Europe undertake an obligation to refrain from concluding alliances directed against other countries on the continent.

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